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UNCLAS SAN SALVADOR 002759

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, WHA/CEN, WHA/PDA, R  
AMEMBASSIES FOR PAS, POL

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - U/S HUGHES AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

"Failed Diplomatic Mission" by Sergio Muoz Bata (member of the Los Angeles Times editorial board) in October 6 moderate daily La Prensa Grfica (circ. 110,000).

"Karen Hughes.recently returned from a mishap-filled first diplomatic mission to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

"When she spoke in Egypt before a carefully selected audience, her interlocutors complained about the inconsistency between.the Bush Administration's efforts to support democracy in the region and the experience of those who live under an undemocratic regime that has the complete backing of the U.S. government. That Hughes did not meet t  
with principal figures of the opposition also did not look good.

"Her dialogue with women in Ankara turned in to a heated discussion against the Iraq war. (When) Hughes defended the need for the war so as to preserve peace,.they responded that war makes women's rights disappear and increases poverty, and that women always pay the highest price. It wasn't any better in Saudi Arabia..

"Some critics.say the main problem was [Bush's] choosing someone who knows the intricacies of domestic politics.but.has no experience in dealing with other cultures. For others the basic problem is the job itself.. At this moment in history, complaints about U.S. policy in regions of conflict are valid. The war and occupation of Iraq are not justified even if you accept that Saddam Hussain was a tyrant.

"What the U.S. should do to improve its image is. to use its enormous power to be an honest broker when asked and [have] the wisdom to stay out when not asked."  
BUTLER